

opportunity to become independent, self-sufficient wage earners.

For almost all Americans, employment focuses on ability. But for people with disabilities, it is often the disability that takes precedence. We all have abilities and as responsible citizens, it is our imperative to apply them for the greater good. When all Americans work, communities will benefit as people with disabilities become self-sufficient, tax-paying citizens. I commend people with disabilities for their tireless efforts to share their abilities in the American workplace despite barriers, and hope that someday the high unemployment rate will be a thing of the past.

I am proud to support a program that helps us reach the goal of employment for all: the AbilityOne Program. The AbilityOne Program provides much-needed employment opportunities by using the purchasing power of the Federal Government to buy products and services from participating community-based nonprofit agencies that are dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. In this program, people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities have the opportunity to acquire job skills and training, receive good wages and benefits and gain greater independence and quality of life.

In the United States, the program serves nearly 38,000 people with disabilities and generated approximately \$369 million in wages earned and \$1.6 billion in products sold. In Georgia alone, over 900 people with disabilities earned \$8.7 million in wages last year as a result of AbilityOne. I am proud that Georgia's 10th congressional district is home to brand-new AbilityOne contract at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center. The Honorable Charlie was an AbilityOne Congressional Champion during his years in office and I am proud to carry on his tradition of supporting people with disabilities and the fine work they do.

It is with great pleasure that I extend my support to the AbilityOne Program, its supporters, and its workers for making a difference in unemployment among people with disabilities in this country.

REGARDING THE LAND USE RESTRICTION PROVISION OF H.R. 2963, THE PECHANGA LAND TRANSFER BILL

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on an important piece of legislation that I have authored, H.R. 2963, The Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians Land Transfer Act of 2007. This legislation will place 1,178 acres of land currently maintained by the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, into trust for the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians to manage and maintain. These lands are part of the Pechanga tribe's ancestral lands and contain numerous cultural, historical, and religious elements of importance to them.

Specifically, I want to discuss Section 2(h) of the bill, which is entitled "Restricted Use of Transferred Lands."

(h) RESTRICTED USE OF TRANSFERRED LANDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The lands transferred under subsection (a) may be used only for the protection, preservation, and maintenance of the archaeological, cultural, and wildlife resources thereon.

(2) NO ROADS.—There shall be no roads other than for maintenance purposes constructed on the lands transferred under subsection (a).

When the restrictive language in this section was initially added to H.R. 4908, the original version of the bill I introduced in the 108th Congress, it was at the request of former House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo. It was added during the markup of the bill on September 22, 2004, with the purpose of ensuring that no commercial, casino or gaming related development would take place on the lands designated for transfer within the bill, and that those lands would be maintained as open space for the preservation, protection, and maintenance of the archaeological, cultural and wildlife resources thereon. The development restrictions were added with the assent of representatives of the Pechanga tribal government and myself as author of the legislation.

Since I reintroduced this bill in the 110th Congress, my intent for this section has not changed. In fact, development restrictions within the bill were strengthened further with the addition of a prohibition of the construction of any roads upon the transferred land other than for the purpose of maintenance of archaeological, cultural and wildlife resources.

It is my intention as the author of H.R. 2963 that the legislation prohibit commercial, casino or gaming related construction or development on the lands designated in this bill, and that they be preserved as open space. I believe that the restrictions on the use of transferred lands included in this bill are a clear expression of this intent. Additionally, I have conferred with the Solicitor General's Office of the Department of the Interior who state that the wording of Section 2(h) implements this intent and the land use restrictions are enforceable by the Department of the Interior.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF POLICE OFFICER ANDREW CROSS FROM THE FAIRFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Police Officer Andrew Cross who faithfully served in the California police force since 1980.

Officer Cross's service to our community began when he joined the Seaside Police Department in January 1980. From there, he transitioned to the Monterey Police Department. After 18 years of service to Monterey, Officer Cross came to the Fairfield Police Department in December 2000.

During his time with the Fairfield Police Department, Officer Cross served as a highly regarded active patrol officer.

Officer Cross's commitment to his community was evident on a daily basis. He was a loyal representative of the law enforcement community, admired for his hard work and dedication, and his presence will be missed.

HONORING MR. AUSTIN SIMON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Mr. Austin Simon. A pioneer and man of great distinction, Mr. Simon was the first African-American Postmaster in the 9th Congressional District. We lost our beloved Austin Simon on May 5, 2008. Known as "Si" to his loved ones, Mr. Simon lived a full and vibrant 81 years, and although his presence will be sorely missed among his family and friends, his legacy will continue far into the future.

Austin Simon was born in 1926 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Seymour and Mary Simon. Mr. Simon was a retired M.S.C. Postmaster in the Bay Area and was the first African-American to head both the Richmond and Oakland, California offices. The sheer substance of such an incredible life accomplishment attests to Mr. Austin's vitality and energy. He experienced firsthand some of the most important and dynamic moments in the struggles of African-Americans in our country throughout the last century. Mr. Austin was indeed on the frontlines of history, breaking the glass ceiling for generations of African-Americans pursuing careers in the United States Post Office.

In addition to a distinguished career in the postal service, Mr. Simon served his country in the United States Army during World War II. In his community, Mr. Simon participated as an active and committed Mason for more than 50 years and served as the Honorary Grand Master of the Hiram of Tyree Grand Lodge of California. He was also a member of the Stars of Love No. 22 Order of the Eastern Star for 50 years.

Even in his retirement, Mr. Simon was incredibly energetic and proved to be an inspiring role-model throughout his life. Mr. Simon knew the importance of community stewardship and creating lasting relationships with his fellow man. After moving to Las Vegas in 1996, Mr. Simon was quick to become engaged in his new community and search out new ways to contribute to society. In Las Vegas, Mr. Simon became a member of the Alpha Lodge No. 75, which he helped establish into a reputable and impressive organization. He led his fellow Alpha Lodge No. 75 members, dedicating his time and efforts as District Deputy Grand Master.

It is obvious that Mr. Simon's lifelong profession was to help others achieve their dreams and accomplish their goals. A dedicated family man, Mr. Simon balanced his personal, professional, and political dedications so that all who were fortunate enough to know this great man could benefit from his compassion and warmth.

A pillar of strength and historic figure in our community, Mr. Simon will be sorely missed. However, we are thankful for the opportunities he gave us to come together and celebrate the hope and love in our lives. As we say goodbye to him, we have been given yet another opportunity to reflect on the rich past of the African-American community and the tumultuous American century which defined our heritage, diligence, and hopes for the future.

Austin Simon's legacy will surely live on through all who knew him, and all who know

of his great accomplishments. Today, California's 9th Congressional District salutes and honors Mr. Austin Simon. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, especially his wife of 39 years, Mrs. Bertha L. Simon, his daughter Linda Duhon, and his sons Austin Jr., Ricky, Anthony, Aaron, Christopher, Marcus, Gregory, Cedric, and Kevin. His legacy will live on through his siblings, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces, godchildren, in-laws, and loving friends. May his soul rest in peace.

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM "BILL"
EDWARDS

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my dear friend William "Bill" Edwards of Hot Springs, Arkansas, who passed away June 1, 2008, at the age of 79.

I will forever remember Bill Edwards as a good friend, a devoted public servant and someone who cared deeply about improving the quality of life in Hot Springs and Garland County Arkansas. As a natural born leader, he excelled at every task he took on and was an inspiration to all of us who knew him.

Bill Edwards served the people of Hot Springs as Alderman and City Director for more than 35 years, however, most people just knew him as a caring friend. He was one of those rare individuals who never forgot the importance of maintaining a high degree of customer service to ensure that all those he worked with over the years were in good hands. From his very first day on the job working for the people of Hot Springs and Garland County, his number one priority was always the person he was talking with, and he would not stop working until he had exhausted every possibility to help out that individual.

Bill Edwards's leadership in Hot Springs was guided by his dedication to the city and to all of those who work and reside in our beloved state. I truly believe the Hot Springs Sentinel Record, the local paper which covered him over the years, said it best in their editorial on June 3, 2008, by stating, "It is not an exaggeration to say that this director had a 'heart for Hot Springs.'" Whether it was helping a constituent, promoting tourism in the city, or simply putting a big smile on a friend's face, he knew only one way to do it—with a big heart.

Bill Edwards will always be known for his outstanding service to Hot Springs and the surrounding communities. I extend my deepest condolences to his two daughters, Brenda Deaton of Texarkana, Texas, and Laura Rivera of Leander, Texas; his two sisters, Margaret Bennett of Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Martha Young of Hot Springs, Arkansas; his three brothers Jimmy Edwards, Charles Edwards and Mike Edwards, all of Hot Springs, Arkansas; and to his nieces, nephews, and numerous friends. Bill Edwards will be greatly missed in Hot Springs, and I am truly saddened by this loss.

THE SPARTANS ARE SOFTBALL
CHAMPIONS

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we wish to congratulate the girls' softball team of Central Davidson High School for winning the North Carolina 2-A championship. The Spartans won the title on Saturday, May 31. The team was led by seniors Allison Barnak, Lindsay Thore, Hannah Buie, Alison Lohr, and Gina Antonucci, who were an integral part of back-to-back championships along with a 54-game winning streak.

This year's title, which was won at the Walnut Creek Softball Complex in Raleigh, culminated an outstanding season for the Spartans, who were led by Head Coach Gene Poindexter. Not only did they win a State championship, the Spartans finished the year ranked 8th in a national poll of high school softball teams.

The championship contest began and ended quickly. Chelsea Leonard led the way, pitching a one-hit shutout to lead the Spartans to a 7-0 win against formidable South Lenior. The team was led with 2 hits each from Kara Lohr, Whitney Lohr, Hannah Buie, and Nicole Perry.

While there were many strong efforts, the championship win was a team effort including juniors Carrie Jernigan, and Chelsea Leonard, sophomores Leanna Hildebrand, Whitney Lohr, Haley Hanes, Nicole Perry, Laura Fritts, Emily Mills, Mindi Morris, and Haley Thore, along with freshmen Kara Lohr and Emma Comer. And just as important as the players on the field were the leaders off the field. We would like to recognize, head coach Gene Poindexter and his able assistants Jim Welborn, Bryan Starnes, Greg Leonard, Sterling Charles, Steve Hayes, Mike Pickett, Jordan Stogner, Brittney Taylor, and Richard Cid.

Also assisting the team during this incredible season were scorekeeper Ernie Antonucci, public announcer Stewart Koonts, as well as team managers Chris Keel and Brandon Gilchrist.

Again, on behalf of the Sixth District, we would like to congratulate Principal Emily Lipe, Athletic Director and Head Coach Gene Poindexter and everyone affiliated with the Central Davidson Spartans on having another great season and for winning the North Carolina 2-A softball championship for the second year in a row.

TRIBUTE TO ANNE LOMEDICO

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, Anne LoMedico has reached the ranks of the growing number of centenarians in the United States. As she reaches 100 years, on July 26, 2008, she can look back with pride. Anne has lived through the most prolific era in world history.

Anne was born in our very own Bronx, New York. She is a mother of two, grandmother of 7, great-grandmother of 16, and great-great grandmother of 9.

She is a hard worker who isn't afraid to say what's on her mind. From the age of 18 to 67 Anne worked at a bookbinder company. She entered the field as a machine operator and in no time worked her way to a supervisory position. Anne was never one to sit and wait for things to happen. She took initiative and in by doing so, as a union delegate she was once honored with a gold pin from the Bookbinder Union.

Anne is a very active member of her Senior Club at the Nyack Senior Center; she raised the most money out of anyone in the 2007 Walkathon fundraiser. She can also be accredited for helping women in her community who have recently been widowed, get out of the house and into the center of life.

Anne attributes her long life to her strong faith in God, the fact that she believes in eating right, exercising, and not smoking. Before she started driving, Anne would walk from the West Side of Manhattan to the East Side twice a day to go to work. She has watched her children grown and has seen the world change. We thank God for allowing Ms. LoMedico to remain with us and share her years of experience with us all.

I offer her my sincere wishes for the happiest of birthdays and congratulate her for a long and successful life.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF POLICE SERGEANT TIMOTHY
P. GRACE FROM THE FAIRFIELD
POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2008

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Police Sergeant Timothy P. Grace who faithfully served the residents of the city of Fairfield for 31 years.

Sergeant Grace began his service with the Fairfield Police Department on September 27, 1975, where he worked in several capacities including drunk driving enforcement grants, the traffic unit, patrol, investigations and the training and communications unit. Sergeant Grace continued to serve as a defensive tactics instructor as well as a field training officer.

Sergeant Grace earned his well-deserved promotion to the position of police sergeant in 2000. He worked as a valiant leader in both the patrol and the professional standards unit, where his dedication to these units made a valuable impact on the operations of the overall department.

Sergeant Grace evidenced a commitment to his community on a daily basis. He served as a loyal representative of the law and is admired by his community for his hard work, dedication and positive influence on the entire department.